



STINGER BASKETBALL

YEAR IN REVIEW

For Concordia Stingers head basketball coach Doug Daigneault, the 1985-86 season was indeed a difficult one to sum up. There were certainly plenty of positives to reflect upon. In this his 19th season as coach, he recorded his 400th career victory November 9th when the Stingers beat the powerful York Yeomen 93-72 at the McGill University Invitational Tournament. Daigneault's troops won the three other tourneys they participated in, including their own Tip-Off and London Life Centennial competitions at the Loyola campus and the Toronto National. The coach's individual victory total now stands at 416.

The Stingers concluded the year with an overall record of 23-4. In conference play they were on their way to a perfect season, winning eleven straight contests. But a back injury to star center Rob Latter didn't help matters as they dropped decisions of 88-70 and 68-66 in the regular season and conference finals respectively. Heading into the former contest the Stingers had surged to number one in the Canadian University rankings.

For Daigneault, losing the Quebec University Athletic Association final was indeed a heartbreaker. Ditto for the entire team. More than 1,000 fans jammed the Loyola campus gymnasium on that March 2 Sunday afternoon, one of many capacity crowds during the 1985-86 campaign. It was a see-saw affair all the way, with neither club being able to build more than a six point lead all game. In the final 37 seconds Concordia had the first opportunity to break a 66-66 tie, but missed. McGill got the ball back and Sandi Ciacia's field goal was right on the money.

Nonetheless, Concordia gained a wild card berth in a regional tournament at Lethbridge, going up against the host Pronghorns, Victoria and St. Francis Xavier. The Stingers had to settle for the consolation championship, an 83-73 triumph over St. Francis Xavier after losing game one 77-58 to Lethbridge.



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Concordia concluded the year ranked number nine by the CIAU.

Daigneault was named QUAA coach of the year while Latter and guards Craig Norman and Biagio Caresse were selected to the conference's first all-star team.

Playing in each of the team's 27 games Norman scored 566 points, 18 less than his career high two seasons ago. The four year veteran, who will return agains next year, had a per game average of 21 points and led the club with 238 field goals.

The six-foot eight, 225 pound Latter participated in 24 games and notched 476 points for a per game average of 19.8. He was good on 96 of 165 free throw attempts and pulled in 318 rebounds on both defence and offence.

Caresse, like Norman also in his fourth season, missed only one game. He had 388 points, or 14.9 per game.

In addition to the "big three" Concordia was sparked by second year guard Chris Francis' 335 points and Bobby Verelli's strong two way play. When the season ended Daigneault had 17 men on his roster, all of whom will still have eligibility remaining when the 1986-87 campaign rolls around.